



## Drug Demand Reduction Program Quarterly Newsletter

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National Drug Fact Week is an opportunity to shatter the myths about drugs and drug abuse. About a third of high school seniors report using an illicit drug sometime in the past year; more than 10% report nonmedical use of potentially addictive prescription painkillers; and more than 20% report smoking marijuana in the past month. Many young people are not aware of the risks to their health and the dangers while driving under the influence. When individuals are given the facts about drugs, they can be better prepared to make good decisions for themselves and they can share this information with others.

**Fact:** Anabolic-androgenic steroids are usually synthetic substances similar to the male sex hormone testosterone. They do have legitimate medical uses. But doctors never prescribe anabolic steroids to young, healthy people to help them build muscles. Without a prescription from a doctor, anabolic steroids are illegal. A major health consequence from abusing anabolic steroids can include prematurely stunted growth. Some of the most dangerous consequence of steroid abuse include kidney failure; damage to liver; cardiovascular problems including enlargement of heart, high blood pressure, and changes in blood cholesterol leading to an increased risk of stroke/heart attack.



**Fact:** Bath Salts contain one or more manmade chemicals related to cathinone, an amphetamine-like stimulant found naturally in the khat plant. There have been reports of severe intoxication and dangerous health effects from using bath salts. Deaths have been reported in several cases. Bath salts are usually white or brown crystalline powder and are sold in small plastic or foil packages labeled **"not for human consumption."** Bath salts have been linked to a high number of visits to emergency rooms and Poison Control Center. Reports show bath salts users have needed medical attention for heart problems and symptoms of paranoia, hallucinations, and panic attacks.

**Fact:** Cocaine is a powerful stimulant. Stimulants cause a buildup of dopamine in the brain, which can make people who abuse stimulants feel intense pleasure and increased energy. They can also make people feel anxious and paranoid. And with repeated use, stimulants can disrupt the functioning of the brain's dopamine system, dampening user's ability to feel any pleasure at all. Cocaine also speeds up the rest of your body. Your heart beats faster, your body feels too hot, you might shake and twitch, and you don't sleep or eat much. Your positive mood can also change. You can become angry, nervous, and afraid that someone's out to get you. After the "high" of cocaine wears off, you can "crash" and feel tired and sad for days. People who abuse cocaine experience episodes of full-blown paranoid psychosis. Cocaine puts you at risk for heart attack and stroke.





**Fact:** Marijuana is a mixture of the dried and shredded leaves, stems, seeds, and flowers of the cannabis sativa plant. Marijuana has a chemical in it called THC. A lot of other chemicals are found in marijuana about 400 of them. Marijuana affects memory, judgment, and perception. Effects can also be unpredictable when marijuana is used in conjunction with other drugs. THC is up to no good in the brain. THC interferes with learning and memory. THC effects can cause disaster on the road. Research shows that drivers on marijuana have slower reaction times, impaired judgment and problems responding to signals and signs.

**Fact:** Meth is commonly known as “speed, meth, chalk and tina, ice, crystal, crank, glass, fire and go fast.” Meth is swallowed, snorted, injected or smoked. Meth causes rapid heart rate and irregular heartbeat and increases blood pressure and body temperature. It can overheat you so much that you pass out, sometimes this can even be fatal. Repeated use of meth can cause violent behavior, mood swings, and psychosis. Psychosis can include paranoia that can result in homicidal and suicidal thoughts. Over time, meth can cause skin sores, severe weight loss, meth mouth (teeth become broken, stained and rotten), aging, and problems with thinking, emotion and memory.



**Fact:** Spice mixtures are marketed as “natural,” legal alternative to marijuana, but labeled **“not for human consumption.”** They contain dried, shredded plant material along with man-made chemicals that cause mind-altering effects. Users report effects like extreme anxiety, paranoia, and hallucinations. People who abused Spice and were taken to Poison Control Centers report symptoms like a fast heart rate, vomiting, agitation, confusion, and hallucinations. Spice can also raise blood pressure and cause less blood to flow to the heart. It has been associated with heart attacks.

**Fact:** Deadly Fumes. Inhalant abuse is the deliberate concentration and inhaling of common products found in homes to get high. Most inhalants produce a rapid high that is like alcohol intoxication. The chemicals are soaked into the lungs, then into the bloodstream. People die every year from “sudden sniffing death,” when their heart stops beating after sniffing chemicals. Others do irreparable damage to their organs, including their brain.



Source of Information: NIDA, DEA, SAMSHA